

[2 March, 2007]

RAJYA SABHA

(b) to (e) Questions do not arise.

Revival of fertilizer plants

453. SHRI JAPAN KUMAR SEN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be .pleased to state revival status of Madras Fertilizers Limited, Hindustan Fertilizers Corporation and Fertilizer Corporation of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B. K. HANDIQUE): Regarding revival of Madras Fertilizers Limited, possibilities for financial restructuring of the company are being explored. Regarding revival of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation and Fertilizer Corporation of India it is stated that as per the Cabinet decision dated 07.12.2006 the matter has been considered by the Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE) in its meeting held on 09.02.2007. As soon as confirmed minutes are received from BRPSE further action in the matter will be initiated.

Medicine price control

†454. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Supreme Court has issued instructions for reducing prices of medicines in the country;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard;

(c) whether Government have taken any concrete action so far for reducing prices of medicines;

(d) if so, the details of the said action; and

(e) the percentage of decrease in prices of medicines as a result of such action?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B. K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) However, it is stated that the Supreme Court *vide* its interim order dated 10-3-2003 in SLP (C) No. 3668/2003 directed the Government, *inter alia*, to "consider and formulate appropriate criteria for ensuring essential and life saving drugs not to fall out of price control and further directed to review drugs which are essential and life saving in nature till 2nd May, 2003". As per the directions of the Supreme Court, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare reviewed the National Essential Drugs List 1996 and brought out the National List of Essential Medicines 2003 (NLEM 2003).

Keeping in view the directions of the Supreme Court it has been proposed in the draft National Pharmaceutical Policy, 2006 that basket of drugs for price control would be the essential medicines as contained in the NLEM 2003 in addition to the 74 drugs which are at present under price control under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995.

This Policy was submitted before the Cabinet for its approval. The Cabinet considered the Policy in its meeting held on 11-1-2007. It was decided that the matter may, in the first instance, be considered by a Group of Ministers (GOM).

Shortage of fertilizers in Madhya Pradesh

455. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that all the States particularly Madhya Pradesh have been facing shortage of all chemical fertilizers including urea;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any steps in this regard; and

(c) the effective steps taken by Government to avoid shortages of fertilizers so that farmers don't face difficulties as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) While the Demand, availability and sale of fertilizers in the country during 2006-07 (upto January'07) were as follows, sufficient availability of fertilizers was ensured by the Department